

# **SPEAK THE AWARENESS**

March 2012, Theater of the Oppressed Class

**OPENING:** Disclaimer and statement explaining student pieces is read.

*(Each group appears on the stage one at a time.)*

**Alcoholism:** Is mommy okay?

**Domestic Violence:** It's not your fault.

**Teen Pregnancy:** What am I going to do?

**Homelessness:** What's outcome without income?

**Rape:** Rape affects everyone differently.

**Cancer:** She will survive.

*Lights.*

## **ALCOHOLISM**

### **Scene 1:**

**Ethan:** It's like you're screaming and no one can hear. You almost feel ashamed that something could be that important, that without it you feel like nothing. No one will ever understand how much it hurts. You feel hopeless, like nothing can save you.. And when it's over and it's gone, you almost wish that you could have all the bad stuff back so that you could have the good.

*(KATHRINE walks in to see ETHAN falling asleep after drinking a bottle of wine.)*

**Kathrine:** I can't believe he's drinking again. *(she walks over to take the bottle, she walks over to the sink to spill out the rest of the bottle)*

**Ethan:** *(he feels around the table, he gets up and sneaks up behind Kathrine)* What are you doing? What do you have behind your back?

**Kathrine:** Uhh...nothing, it's nothing

**Ethan:** *(he snatches the bottle)* This is money down the drain!

**Kathrine:** But you know what happens when you drink.

**Ethan:** What happens when I drink? You want to see what happens? *(he grabs her by the arm)*

**Kathrine:** No, please!

**Ethan:** *(he throws her to the ground)* Now what am I supposed to drink?! *(he pulls his hand back to slap her)*

**Kathrine:** Wait! There's more in the kitchen! Please! *(Ethan stares at her and walks away.)*

*(film of Kathrine and Ethan happy)*

**Kathrine:** *(speaks while film is playing)* What happened to the sweet man I once knew back in high school, the one who surprised me with flowers and wouldn't let anybody hurt me... *(Epic Pause)*.. Now he's the one hurting me as I stand here covering the bruises where his kisses used to be. I reminisce about the times we had, the days we spent watching the sunset, now the colors seem so dull, the air so thick. But I know one day the sweet, sweet man I fell in love with will come back again and be that prince charming I've been waiting for... but for now, I'll settle with the Beast.

*(Sophie comes out from her hiding place under the table)*

**Sophie:** Mommy...

**Kathrine:** Shh...it's okay, sweetie, Mommy's alright.

*(light shift)*

## **Scene 2:**

*We are shown a somewhat happy family, talking and sitting together.*

**Mistress:** Come, sweetie.

*(There is a knock at the door.)*

**Ethan:** I'll get it. *(he walks to the door)* Are you crazy? What are you doing here?!

**Mistress:** I'm here to give you your daughter. *(she shoves in a little girl, Rosie)*

**Ethan:** What? This isn't my daughter. I'm not taking her. *(he shoves her back out)*

**Mistress:** She's yours. I don't want her. *(she pushes her in again, the both of them are now pushing Rosie in and out of the house)* She's your mistake! *(the mistress runs off)*

**Kathrine:** Who was at the door?

**Ethan:** I need a drink.

**Rosie:** Everything felt so different, like a dream come true. But somehow I felt incomplete, like a bigger part of my life was missing. It was my mom, knowing she wasn't staying I knew I was going to be alone in this place. I knew I had no one else but myself. No matter how perfect this family looks, I'll always rather be with my mom. My so called father wasn't even there to take me in. On my mom's way out of the house, I grab her by her hand and feel the blood gush down my system, all kinds of emotions attack and I began to cry, how could it be. Just when everything was so perfect, my mom, who's been there for me all my life, the one I thought would be there for me for the rest of my life, is gone. This is the end of it. Will this be the last I see her? My heart pounds faster and faster and all I can do is cry. Why? Why is she leaving me here? This seems selfish of her, she's my mother, I'm her daughter, why is she leaving me behind. I can't bare all of this. I can't. She's walking away and I'm not even strong enough to hold her back. Mom left. Will I see her again? One day.

**Scene 3:**

*We see Ethan on the couch drinking wine, Rosie walks in and knocks down his drink)*

**Ethan:** You brat! Clean that up right now!

**Rosie:** Make me, you old drunk!

**Ethan:** What did you say?! *(he grabs her and throws her to the ground and slaps her. Sophie covers her ears and Grace comes in to cover Sophie)* You clean that up right now!

**Grace:** Dad, stop it! How can you hit your own daughter like that? What's wrong with you?

**Kathrine:** Stop, please! *(she grabs his arm and he slaps her)*

**Ethan:** Don't touch me! *(Kathrine crawls over to cover Rosie)* You're going to protect this child, this delinquent, this mistake! You're pathetic. *(he kicks them both)* Get back in that kitchen and make me a sandwich...now!

**Grace:** Mom, Dad! Stop fighting, please. Look at Sophie, how terrified she is. Do you guys ever think about her? How young she is? How she shouldn't have to see this?

*(Ethan and Kathrine walk off stage, stunned and angry.)*

**Grace:** Having to deal with my family arguing 24/7 is by far the hardest thing I've been through. It's like being forced to be in a place you don't want to be in. This is why I'm so focused in my school work. It's as if it was just yesterday when we were all happy, Christmas Eve, waiting to open our presents...It started with the drinking. Father started drinking more and more every night. What bothers me the most is what my mother and baby sister have to go through. The bruises my mother gets, the yelling, cursing Sophie has to hear. I always make it my job to take

care of her. It's been hard on all of us dealing with him. It's sad for me, I wish it could all stop. The beating, the crying, the cursing. Can't anyone make it stop?

**Scene 4:**

*Sophie is sitting on the floor with her bear, in the background we hear the sounds of fighting, arguing and glass breaking)*

**Sophie:** I walked in at the wrong time. Why is daddy screaming at mommy? Because of the phone? He always gets mad over the little things. I don't want him to hit her. It'll make the bruise on her face worse. Oh! .. There he goes, his voice is getting louder. I don't want him to see me watching. He might get mad and hit me. I'll hide here in my room. Poor mommy! Nobody else can hear her screaming in pain but me, and I can't do anything about it. I wish I could do something to stop the fighting forever so that Mommy, Daddy, Grace, Rosie and I could be happy all the time. I want to be able to spend time with mommy, go out and hold her hand without worrying about daddy getting angry and mommy being scared. Poor mommy, can't this all end!? *(she crawls to the table and reaches up)*

**Operator:** 9-1-1...What is your emergency? *(curtains fall, end.)*

## **DOMESTIC VIOLENCE**

**Nakiya:** Love

**Bria:** Hate

**Alex:** Neglect

**Asiya:** Torture

**Tara:** Pain

*Interview will play*

*Then during the presentation a picture slideshow will play on a loop*

**Nakiya:** I remember the first time we met like yesterday. It was love at first sight. Every day in school our eyes met, but we never talked before. Till June 14 when he came up to me and fed me a corny line. He said, 'How much does a polar bear weigh?' I laughed and said, 'Enough to break the ice.' It was so cheesy, but it made me smile and I've never forgot it till this day. That same day we exchanged numbers.

**Bria:** But you love him.

**Nakiya:** But I love him.

**Bria:** He will change, girl. When you first met him, you were so in love. You shouldn't give up on someone you love. You should continue to be loving because he is your soul mate. He buys you everything you want and more. Every time you talk about the first time you guys met, your world lights up.

**Alex:** But he's not like that anymore. Today you came over and I saw your arm. You had black and blue bruises all over your arm. I asked you what happened, and you came up with some excuse...

**Nakiya:** I fell down the stairs.

**Alex:** What a lie! I feel like you're brainwashed. You don't have a mind of your own anymore. Lie after lie is all that comes out of your mouth now. It's always the same story every time.

**Bria:** You talk about him all the time, and I see in your eyes you're truly in love. Right now it's complicated, but eventually he'll change. Maybe you should stop pushing his buttons and stop complaining. Maybe you're the one that should change!

**Nakiya:** Maybe I'm the one that should change !

**Alex:** Once you told me this lie. You had another bruise and you told me that...

**Nakiya:** The car door hit me!

**Alex:** You are so convinced that I believe your lies. Every time I see you, I tell you to leave him, but it's always the same story

**Nakiya:** But I love him!

**Alex:** I always tell you it's a matter of time before you end up in the hospital.

**Nakiya:** But sadly, that's not the same person today. Its like he's a stranger. I always make him mad but I try so hard not to. As time goes on, it gets worse.. And now my eye is swollen shut!

**Asiya and Tara: Scene 2**

**Tara:** (*phone rings*) Hello? Yeah, this is her mother. She didn't come to school today? Oh, thank you, I'll talk to her about it.

**Tara:** (*screaming*) I just can't believe my daughter sometimes!

(*Opens bedroom door pulls Asiya off the floor*)

**Asiya:** Don't touch me!

**Tara:** You didn't go to school today, did you? Why are you doing this? It's because of your friends, isn't it? I keep telling you how important it is to choose your friends wisely, but you just don't understand.

**Asiya:** Mom, I just can't believe you! I don't understand what your problem is. Everyday you barge into my room slamming the door so hard that I feel it will break off. Slamming the door isn't going to make you any more powerful.

**Tara:** (*loudly*) How dare you pick those kinds of people to be your friends? (*leans forward to smack Alice*)

**Asiya:** (*grabs hand*) What do you mean, how dare I? Who are you to tell me this? I have the right to choose my friends and I know what is best for me!

**Tara:** I'm YOUR mother! I only want the best for you, but you just don't seem to understand my problem.

**Asiya:** Why can't you just accept the truth instead of screaming at me all the time?! You punish me, it's just going to get worse. Every time you scream at me, the topic of my friends comes up. I just wish I can run away from this house to a place you can never find me.

(*Tara lunges at Asiya, then leaves the room. Asiya sits on her bed, talking to her self*)

**Asiya:** My mom doesn't understand me. She doesn't realize that I get hurt so much from the inside. All she cares about is me being the perfect daughter; one she can take out in society and portray as a role model. I hate the fact that she always brings my friends up in every conversation. I looked for a friend in my mom, but instead I found a heartless person.

**Nakiya, Bria , Alex:** Love and Abuse

**Tara, Asiya:** Don't mix.

**ALL of us:** It's impossible to fix.

**Tara:** Don't let this be you. For support call : 1800-621-HOPE (Safe Horizon)

## **TEEN PREGNANCY**

*\*Spotlight on characters*

### **SCENE 1**

- Marilyn is in her room changing for her nephew's baby shower, while her boyfriend

*Michael walks in and surprises her from behind.*

**MICHAEL:** *(covers Marilyn's eyes)* Boo! What's taking you so long?

**MARILYN:** I don't know what to wear.

**MICHAEL:** Can you hurry up? We still have to go buy a present for your stupid nephew!

**MARILYN:** *(pushes Michael away)* Why would you call a baby, something so cute, stupid?  
*(turns around)*

**MICHAEL:** Why are you overreacting?...You know I was joking...what's wrong?

**MARILYN:** It's cause....cause...I'm pregnant.. *(looks away)*

**MICHAEL:** . . You're pregnant?!...*(pause)* You're pregnant. *(says it without fear & they hug)*  
It's okay. We'll be okay. I'm here for you.

*-Michael says his monologue while slides in the background play images of happy families laughing and playing -*

**MICHAEL:** I don't think I ever knew of love like I do now. I wasn't so sure of it before, but it's that feeling I get when I'm around her. Wow, one of these days I am going to know the feeling of being a father like I learned to love, both thanks to that one woman in my life. A woman worth a thousand words, but not one could really describe her. Such an amazing woman being a mother, it brings wonders of our child. I never thought I'd use that word when talking about a kid...our, our child. Everyday is one day closer to the day I get to see myself, her, both of us, in the image of our kid.

## SCENE 2

- *Lights on Marilyn and Michael, they tell the audience facts about teen pregnancy and how it's not always as cute as you imagine.*
- *Spotlight on Sawyer*

**SAWYER:** Why, Why, Why?! I don't understand...how could this happen? I thought things would be different and he would be there for us, but right after I told him I was expecting his baby. ...our baby.. he froze and all he said was, 'I can't do this,' and he left. ...he left us. ...All the things he said, they were never true. I still remember when he told me, 'You're the girl for me... true love always.' Ugh, I don't know what I'm going to do with this situation. Can I manage this alone? Can I handle such big responsibility? Who can I turn to now? My family? What if they react like he did, what then? I.. I just can't do this . ...not now. ..

*-Stacy comes rushing after receiving a phone call from sawyer-*

**STACY:** I came as soon as I got your call, what's the matter?

*-awkward silence-*

**SAWYER:** Well. .. remember that day at your place when I got nauseous and I thought it was a stomach virus?

**STACY:** Yeah. ..(*stares at Sawyer*) What about it?

**SAWYER:** Ahh, well, I wasn't expecting this, and now I'm stuck not knowing what to do or anything and I just can't! .. and. ..

**STACY:** Expecting what?. .please don't tell me you're. ..

**SAWYER:** Yes.. .I'm pregnant ..

**STACY:** Ahh! are you sure?... What are you planning to do now ? How far along are you? Did you tell the father?

**SAWYER:** I went to the doctor this morning to confirm it and he said I was about 3 weeks. As soon as I left the doctor's office, I called the father and he said he didn't want to know anything about it. ..I don't know what to do ..

**STACY:** I. .I don't know what to say. ..

*-the lights go off, then there's a spot light on stacy-*

**STACY:** I don't know what she wants to do. She expects so much from him, but he's just not there. She's not alone, though. She has me, I'm here. I want her to know that. I mean it when I say I'll be there. Things will be different, she can move on, she can go places, go beyond what she thinks, but I need her to trust me. I'm her friend; I'll be there.

### SCENE 3

- *A slide of a Sonogram in the background, MICHAEL & MARILYN on one side of the stage and SAWYER & STACY on the other, they will remain in a frozen picture then the lights go off and then a slide with pictures of cute babies come up.*

### SCENE 4

- *Reaction to both pregnancies ; Michael and Marilyn would decide to keep the baby.*
- *Sawyer & Stacy in the other side of the stage, shows that she decides to keep the baby yet totally lost on how she's going to be able to maintain it, but she is still happy, you can say "happy lost"*

- presentation ends with the film of an interview of pregnant teens-

## **POVERTY/HOMELESSNESS**

*(Scene starts with interview playing while group lays in a pile. Interview will stop and Mensur's GIF will play. For the next sequence, each group member gets up, speaks, and sits on the end of the stage)*

**Mensur:** I need a job.

**Brian:** Future consequences. *(holding handcuffs)*

**Faye:** Mother. *(holds liquor bottle)*

**Ashley:** I thought I was safe *(holding one shoe)*

*(Each group member get ups one at a time to perform their monologue and sits on the side of the stage)*

**Mensur:** *(while he's presenting, army related quotes, statistics, and photographs will be projected)* I used to be normal. I'd wake up to my dog licking my feet. I was always up and ready for a new day until...until I went to Iraq. I saw frightful events that affected me emotionally. I saw my friend get shot and all I heard were his cries, and bombs going off all around me. I couldn't do anything except panic. My friend was screaming with agony and yelling for me to help him, but my fear got the best of me and all I did was run to save myself. I was in a danger zone, I didn't know what to do. I can still hear him yelling my name, and the flashbacks replay in my head over and over. Now I have post dramatic stress disorder, and this is holding me back from getting a job. I fill out applications, go to interviews, but I keep getting denied. All I can think is, 'How will I be able to pay my rent?', 'What's wrong with humanity?', 'When am I going to be normal again?'

**Brian:** *(while he's presenting jail/drug related quotes, statistics, and photographs will be projected)* I'm not a bad person, I just did what I had to do. It cost and wasted five years of my life. I had no one watching out for me. So I associated with what was involved around me, which were drugs and violence. I saw the cop lights in the mirror as I was driving on the highway. I just pulled over because I knew I was wrong. They found the coke, so why would I deny it? I knew what I was doing, I had it tattooed on my arm, 'live by the rules of the games we play.' I didn't intend to keep selling coke. I was saving up money to move to Florida and start over, but it was too late. After five years in jail I had lost my money, my job, and my record stopped me from getting a real job. I don't want to make the same mistake, but it's survival of the fittest, and I got to get mine.

**Faye:** *(while she's presenting alcoholism related quotes, statistics and photographs will be projected)* Where am I going to go? I'm waiting for the bus, but I have no destination. I'm

eighteen years old and I'm alone. I feel the crumpled eviction notice in my jacket pocket. It only brings back bad memories. My mother wasn't herself when she drank. Empty liquor bottles were all over my house. Every time she had one of her drunken rages, she would throw bottles at me. She started drinking when she lost her job. She blamed me for everything, even the unpaid bills drenched in liquor. When they evicted us from our home and took my mother to rehab she looked so hopeless. They had to carry her because she couldn't walk on her own two feet. I can still hear her mumbling, 'don't drink, it will destroy you.' I look up across the street and see a sign flashing. '24 hour liquor store.'

**Ashley:** *(while she's presenting rape related quotes, statistics and photographs will be projected)* There's this park two blocks away from my house, literally just two. When I was seven years old, my brother and I used to bet who could touch the sky from the swing set first. When I was fifteen, I taught my cousin how to ride a bike here. I loved this place. It's so close to my home, just two blocks away... I was safe here. A year passes, it's spring again. I plant trees, flowers, and repaint the benches. This park, somewhere I spent my childhood, I thought I was safe. I grew up here, hot summer nights playing cards with my friends - crisp fall mornings playing handball with my brothers. This was my place. I thought I was safe. I'd walk two blocks and get here. I've walked through here thousands of times. I knew it like the back of my hand. Tonight, though... was different. Like a calm before a storm it was just too quiet. Still, I thought I was safe. Two blocks from home - just two. I thought I was safe, until they grabbed me. I realized here, for the first time, I wasn't safe. I realized this too late. I lost a piece of me every time a different one of them took a turn, and now I have nothing.

*(Mensur and Brian walk off SL, Faye and Ashley walk SR. Maria stands up and walks DSC)*

**Maria:** *(while she's presenting, group home related quotes, statistics and photographs will be projected)* I'm staring out of this car window, watching rain drops race to the bottom. I don't know what's going on, I don't know where my father is taking me. He says I'm going to be living in a better place now, but I may never see him again. My father has been struggling to take care of me ever since my mother passed away. I've been wearing the same pair of shoes for three years now. I don't know where I'm going, but I'm scared. We finally arrive, and I read above, 'Home for Teens.' I start crying, but I try to keep it together. This is going to be better for me, right? Before I know it, I am living with a bunch of teenagers who need a home just like me. For awhile, I just deal with it because it is for the best, but I start to miss my father. Every day is the same routine. Sleep, eat, feel sorry for myself and fake a smile. I can't take it anymore, I have to get out of here. Tonight, when everyone is asleep, I decide to escape. I go through the back door of the place and start to run. I feel someone following me, the security guard is chasing me and telling me to come back. I run faster. Looking back while running, I suddenly feel a big truck shattering my bones and giving me a concussion. My life flashes before my eyes, it all stops and I see my mother. My father was right, I'm in a better place now, I'm home.

*(Curtain)*

**RAPE**

*(Spot lights dim on and the girls are lined up in size order: Maria, Cindy, Gabriela, Zakiyra, and Sabiana.)*

**All girls:** Rape!

*(Projector shows the word “rape!”)*

*(Cindy steps out of the line to her left)*

**Cindy:** Rape affects everyone differently.

*(Cindy starts to cut her wrist and on the projector they show picture of cut wrists and the sound of water dripping is being played. Lights are tinted red. Maria drops to the floor and starts to rock back and forth. Projector shows words like confused, violated, angry, and hurt, traumatized, and fear, scared. Lights are bright and harsh. Gabriela with tape on her mouth is angry and she kicks a chair with her foot. Lights are turning darker. Zakiyra goes to sit in the chair with no emotion. Sabiana walks to the front of the stage)*

**Sabiana:** Although I was raped, I am still standing strong.

*(Lights dim slowly.)*

I just didn't know what to do! If you were in my position, what would you have done? What would you have said? Just the thought of someone I saw as my own father touching me, taking of my clothing as if I was his woman and making me do things my young mind wasn't prepared for. It was traumatizing! It was killing me on the inside, but when you look at me you never would have thought of what I was going through. I kept a smile on my face, when in all reality I just wanted someone there to hold me close and tell me everything was going to be alright, to wipe away my tears at night. To listen to how I felt. Someone to just care! *(Pause)*

After two years of it, you'd think I'd get used to it and not care as much, but no, that wasn't the case at all. It felt worse each and every time! You see the average 5 year old girl outside playing with friends or playing with her Barbie dolls, but at five I was taking on something much greater, something I never wanted but was forced on me, something that broke me down. I felt so alone. *(Pause)*

This one time he was waiting for my mommy to fall asleep. He turned of all the lights except for the one in the little kitchen. He opened my bedroom door and stood there with a smile so horrible I can never forget it. He had something behind his back, but I couldn't tell what it was until he pulled it out. The feeling of the cold gun pressed against my forehead is something no little girl should experience. He said, 'I swear if you ever tell anyone I'll kill you. And you know it.' I nearly froze to death. I just closed my eyes, kept my mouth shut, and prayed so hard. *(Pause)*

*(Sabiana walks to Gabriella and rips the tape of her mouth. Then she walks to the far right of the stage sits on chair when Zakiyra gets up. Zakiyra walks to the center of the stage and the spotlight is on her.)*

**Zakiyra:** It was Thanksgiving night and I was still thinking about all the food I ate and the games we played. Everyone had gone to sleep except my brother and me. It was getting late and my eyes kept drooping, so I started getting up so that I could go to bed. My brother grabbed my hand and pulled me down. I asked him ‘what do you want?’ He didn’t say anything. All he did was pull me close towards him and hugged me so tight that I could hear him breathing. I could feel him pulling up my shirt from behind. I tried pulling away and telling him to stop, but all that did was make him tighten up. Again I told him to stop, I couldn’t breathe. I tried kicking him and hurting him...anything to make him pull away. It wasn’t working. All I could think was, ‘What is going on?’ My breath was coming out short and fast. Why wasn’t anybody doing anything? Didn’t they hear me struggling to move? The more I fought, the more he tightened his arms around me and the more he did that, the more my vision turned grey. I blacked out.

*(We hear the faint sound of baby’s crying and while she is speaking the sound gets louder.)*

The next day I woke up in so much pain. There were scratches and bruises all over my body. I saw blood. I tried calling for my mom, but my voice wouldn’t come out. She finally heard me, and when she saw me, she didn’t know what to do. She asked me what happened and I said, ‘Everything.’ She rushed me to the emergency room. The doctor checked me and when he was done he looked very sad. He said... *(Pause)* he said that I was pregnant.

*(The baby crying sounds are so loud now that it is all you can hear. Zakiyra hangs her head and walks to Gabriela. She rips of the tape and walks to the right of the stage and stands next to Sabiana. Baby sound ends. Cindy moves to the center of the stage. spotlight goes on Cindy. Lights change to red. We hear water dripping.)*

**Cindy:** I don’t want to live anymore. Maybe if I didn’t live anymore then I wouldn’t remember that day, that dreadful day. The people I trusted, the people I thought were my friends. They hurt me. They ruined my life. But you have to understand, though. Do you know what it’s like to have a person on top of you? To have them touching you and grabbing you in places you never wanted to be touched? I hope not. And I hope you never do.

The way they grabbed me as if I was theirs to have. And how they all violated me... I would never wish that on my worst enemy. The worst part is that it’s my fault. I went in that house. I trusted them and I know I shouldn’t have. I could have fought! I could have kicked and screamed and fought a little harder just to get away. But I didn’t. I was just so afraid that I didn’t say anything and just gave up and I didn’t tell anyone.

*(The water stops dripping and then Cindy walks to the Gabriella and rips of the tape. Then Cindy walks to the right of the stage and joins the other girls. Spotlight leaves Cindy and goes to Maria. Maria moves to the center of the stage)*

**María:** La niña después de haber sido abusada llora de dolor y de ira por no haberse podido defender de ese hombre. Desde ese momento la vida de ella cambio para siempre. Ella tenía un gran odio asía los hombres y desconfianza de todos. Ella sentía que querían hacerle daño y lastimarla. Ella sufrió sola nadie sabia lo que le paso. Ella no dijo nada por miedo a ser rechazada y a que su familia no le creería, ella se sentía culpable, siempre se culpo asta pensó en quitarse la vida, pero había algo que lo impedía hacerlo y por esa razón era su hermana. Ella quiso protegerla para que no le pase lo que a ella ya le paso, pero esa niña ya no le veía el sentido a la vida, ella tenía 9 anos cuando abusaron de ella y avece ella decía que si sus papa hubieran estado con ella nada de eso le hubiera pasado, pero que de igual manera ya no importaba porque ese hombre ya le desgracio la vida.

**TRANSLATION:** The little girl after being raped cries of pain and madness, because she wasn't able to defend herself from that man. Since that moment, her life changed forever. She hated and distrusted

all men. She felt like all they wanted to do was hurt her. She suffered alone, and never told anybody. Nobody knew what was wrong with her. She never told anybody in fear of being rejected and that her family wouldn't believe her. She always blamed herself for what had happened and even thought of committing suicide, but there was something that gave her a reason to stay in this world and that reason was her sister. She wanted to protect her so she wouldn't have to go through the same thing she went through, but other than that she didn't think life had a meaning. She was only nine years old when that man raped her. She sometimes thought that if her parents would have been there for her then none of that would have happened, but all of that didn't matter anymore because that man had already ruined her life.

*(Maria walks to Gabriella and rips of the tape. Then she walks to the far right of the stage to join the picture. Gabriella walks to the center of the stage and the spotlight is on her.)*

**Gabriella:** Did you know that 60% of sexual assaults are not reported to police? That's 15 out of 16 rapists that will never spend a day in jail. 38% of assaults are committed by someone known by the victim. That's means two out of 3 people were raped by a friend or a relative or a lover or even a teammate. Every two minutes someone is sexually assaulted and most of them are from the ages of 12 to 18. 1.3 American women annually may be victims of rape or attempted rape. 12% of female survivors were assaulted when they were ten or younger, and almost half of female survivors have been raped before they turn 18. 80% have been raped before 25 years of age.

*(Lights go on Maria also)*

**Maria:** If you are ever raped or sexually assaulted, the first and most important thing you should do is find someplace safe, away from the attacker. Like, for example, the nearest hospital, a police station or even a neighbor's house. Call 911 for immediate police and medical response.

*(Lights go on Zakiyra also)*

**Zakiyra:** Preserve all evidence of the attack- don't bathe or even wash your hands or brush your

teeth. Do not change your clothes. If you think you've been drugged, do not urinate until you get to the hospital where they can take a clean specimen. If you absolutely can't wait, urinate into a clean container and take it with you.

*(Lights go on Cindy also)*

**Cindy:** Contact a trusted friend for moral support. Go to the hospital as soon as possible and ask them to conduct a rape exam (also known as a rape kit) to collect forensic evidence. The exam can be done within 72 hours of an assault, but the earlier the better.

*(Lights go on Sabiana also)*

**Sabiana:** As part of the medical (i.e. non-forensic) portion of the exam, the hospital may also test for pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections. Most hospitals will also offer HIV prophylaxis and emergency contraception. If they don't, feel free to ask.

*(Lights go on Sabiana also)*

**Gabriella:** Call a rape crisis center and ask if a counselor can meet you at the hospital. You can reach a counselor through the National Sexual Assault Hotline, operated by RAINN: 800-656-HOPE. The call is free, confidential, and accessible 24-hours a day. You can also find the list of local rape crisis centers, searchable by city and state.

**All:** "Break the silence!"

**Gabriella:** Because if you don't, then who will?

*(lights black out and girls walk back stage.)*

## **CANCER**

### Scene 1: Doctor's Office

**DOCTOR:** I hate seeing that expression. I hate having to be the person to break bad news to people. The worst part is when they look at you as they take in what I say. Their face turns pale and their eyes scream 'help.' I do my best, but I can't save everyone. Not all my patients survive cancer. Her mother was one of my patients, but the chemo drained all the strength she had. Then one day, she never woke up. I feel like it's my fault when they pass. Time is of the essence. I have to see what I can do for her. *(Sigh)*

*(Doctor is seated in the middle of his office. He looks through files. A knock is heard)*

**DOCTOR:** Come in.

*(Three people enter)*

**ISABELLE:** Hello, Doctor. This is my brother and my husband.

**DOCTOR:** Good morning. Nice to meet you.

**ISABELLE:** So, what are my results?

**DOCTOR:** Please, take a seat.

*(Isabelle, Cowey, and Enrique take their seats in front of the Doctor's desk.)*

**DOCTOR:** Well, we got your results. I'm sorry to be the one to tell you this, but you have cancer.

*(There is a pause as Isabelle allows this to sink in)*

**ISABELLE:** Oh.

**DOCTOR:** We must act fast or the cancer will spread.

**ISABELLE:** I understand.

*(The doctor gets up and walks around the desk facing the audience.)*

## **Scene 2: The Commercial**

*(Isabelle, Cowey, and Enrique are seated in the living room watching tv)*

**TV:** Limited time offer. This stainless steel pressure cooker can be yours for only 3 payments of \$19.99.

**Enrique:** Stupid commercials! There's nothing on right now but commercials.

*(He flips through the channels. Cowey lies down on Isabelle's lap.)*

**TV:** Slap and Chop! The new kitchen tool that is easily useable and changes the face of cooking!

*(Changes channel)*

**TV:** Mom, I don't understand why I have to go to school today!

**ENRIQUE:** Oh, here's the channel for the game!

**TV:** Cancer kills millions each year, but you can be treated. Together we can find a cure.

---Silence---

*(Isabelle moves uncomfortably and Cowey moves away from her lap and sits up. Enrique stands front and center)*

**ENRIQUE:** Oh god, I hate this! I mean why her? Why us ? It's like a meteor shower is hurtling towards us: and not the little tiny shooting stars-looking ones, those are nice. I mean the end of humanity-type ones. You see, cancer is like a parasite, it eats away foundations. It already did. I mean, my mom died of cancer and I guess it was tough, but we did cry 'cause we were raised strong, whipped into shape. But I think without her we're not, sadly we're not. I mean, my sister hasn't even started treatment. She was diagnosed not so long ago. If my mom were here she would have made my sister swallow the whole bottle of pills already. Well, I guess that's my job now, besides my real job, you know, and I'm not gonna quit school either. This is no pathetic excuse to stop studying, I guess. It's just sad to know we have to face this problem again...just sad to know it exists. Poor Sis. She's been forced to grow up and I guess it's my turn. She just won't let me in. I need a distraction...this stupid baseball game. The Yankees are playing today. CC's pitching.

*(He sits in front of the TV)*

**COWEY:** How are you feeling?

**ISABELLE:** Don't ask.

**COWEY:** I didn't mean anything by it... *(Sigh)* it was just a question.

**ISABELLE:** Well stop asking. I'm fine, okay?

**COWEY:** Okay, then. *(Frowns and gets up)*

**COWEY:** My wife's smile was the first thing that caught my eye, but ever since we went to the doctor and found out she had cancer, she hasn't been the same. She pushes me away, and she stares into space a lot more. When we talk, I don't feel like she's really there with me. I know she's scared, but it's not fair that I lose her to cancer this way. She has to fight it. I love her...I want her to go back to being who she used to be. Maybe it's my fault, something I did. I don't know what I can do to help. I'll feel like a failure if I let her die. She doesn't deserve this. She's been through so much already.

*(Cowey walks out of the living room and heads towards the kitchen. Cancer steps forward, where Cowey stood a moment ago.)*

**CANCER:** I am cancer. I am the creature that knocks you off your feet. I absorb your strengths till you have nothing left. *(Snickers. Family returns to living room)* I love the face you make when you see me intrude so disastrously into your happy life. Then you start to feel the heavy

toll of my sickness. I enjoy hearing your long sighs of exhaustion when a block starts to feel like a mile run. You should know all about the symptoms though...or did you forget your mother already? (*Cancer*

*scrunches his face trying to recall her.*) She was a tough cookie and put up a fight to the end. A bit annoying actually, but she couldn't defeat me. When death took her beyond the skies I didn't hesitate to move on. There's always a job out there for me. There are always people to kill. In this world I was made to cause suffering so my job is never done and being the heartless sickness I am, I am always thirsty for more. (*Cancer returns to her spot by Isabelle.*)

**COWEY:** I can't take this silence!

**ENRIQUE:** Yeah, we're really worried about you.

**COWEY:** We want to help. Just let us do something.

*(Isabelle stares at Cowey and Enrique blankly)*

**ISABELLE:** *(to the audience)* I have felt this cold feeling before. It seems like just yesterday I lost my mother, but it's been a year. I wish I had her, but I don't. I have my husband and brother. I don't want to admit it, but they keep me strong. It's just that sometimes I feel like the cancer is stronger than me, but I want to look forward to the kids I wish to have. I don't want to give up. I need to accept support. I need to accept help. I have cancer, but I'm strong. I will lose my hair, my skin will become pale, but I will not lose my life. I refuse to be a statistic. I will not let my name be engraved on a tombstone just yet. With the strength of my family, I will survive.

*(Family hugs ISABELLE)*

**CLOSING:** *Slide show plays with music while each group enters and sits on the edge of the stage. At the conclusion of the slide show, group says:*

We are the 99%. Speak the awareness!

*Curtain.*